



**PERTH AND KINROSS INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD**  
**15 February 2023**

**CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22**

**Report by Chief Social Work Officer**  
**(Report No. 23/49)**

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This report provides the Chief Social Work Officer's overview of social work services in Perth and Kinross during the financial year 2021/22. It sets out how social care and social work services have been delivered up until end of March 2022, and in some instances up to end of July 2022.

It covers the key challenges that continue in respect to the additional needs and demands that arise as a result of COVID19 for our most vulnerable and at-risk citizens. The report also details the arrangements to enable the Chief Social Work Officer to fulfil the responsibilities outlined in Section 5 (1) of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 (as amended).

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended the Integration Joint Board:
- (i) Notes the wide range of work being carried out by Perth and Kinross Council to provide effective social work services and the continued efforts by staff to manage the additional needs and demands that are present as a result of the ongoing impact of COVID19.
  - (ii) Notes that the report has been submitted to the Scottish Government and the Chief Social Work Adviser's office.
  - (iii) Notes the CSWO Annual Report for 2021/2022 as set out in Appendix 1.

**3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT**

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background
- Section 5: Proposals

- Section 6: Further Considerations
- Appendices

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 requires every Local Authority to appoint a single Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO).
- 4.2 Scottish Ministers published statutory guidance in 2016 on the role of the CSWO for local authorities and partnerships which have certain social work functions delegated to them. The CSWO role was established to ensure the provision of appropriate professional advice in the discharge of the full range of the local authority's statutory functions and the updated guidance sets out the importance of the CSWO role within Integrated Joint Boards.
- 4.3 The CSWO is accountable to elected members of the Council and must be:
- a qualified social worker, registered with the Scottish Social Services Council;
  - designated as a 'proper officer' of the local authority;
  - of sufficient seniority and experience in both the operational and strategic management of social work services; and
  - a non-voting member of the integration authority.
- 4.4 The CSWO is a role and function, rather than a specific job description and is therefore distinct from the post holder's operational management responsibilities and from the role of the chief officer of the integration authority. It is for the CSWO to use their authority to challenge and intervene when proposals may have a detrimental impact on vulnerable citizens or to the workforce on whom they depend. In leading the social care and social work profession, the CSWO provides:
- professional independent advice to the Chief Executive and elected members in relation to the discharge of the local authority's statutory functions as outlined in the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968;
  - strategic and professional leadership in the delivery of social work services;
  - assistance to local authorities and their partners in understanding the complexities and cross-cutting nature of social work services and the key role they play in meeting local and national outcomes; and
  - support for performance management and the management of corporate risk.
- 4.5 Together with the CSWO, elected members have duties to oversee effective, professional and high-quality social work and social care services are delivered to professional standards. The annual CSWO report and its consideration by Perth and Kinross Council and the Perth and Kinross Integrated Joint Board is one important way to accomplish this. The CSWO annual report is an opportunity to gauge the quality of performance of social

work and social care services and to identify the challenges for continuing to meet the needs of local people and communities into the future.

- 4.6 Over 2021/22 the CSWO role was carried out by Jacquie Pepper alongside her responsibilities as Depute Director (Education and Children's Services) and from 3 March 2022 as Chief Officer for the Health and Social Care Partnership. The Interim Head of Adult Social Work and the Head of Services for Children, Young People and Families deputised and provided cover when required.
- 4.7 Social work and social care services for adults including adult protection are delegated to the Integration Joint Board in line with the Perth and Kinross Health and Social Care Integration Scheme 2022.

## **5. ANALYSIS AND PROPOSALS**

- 5.1 The Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser (CSWA) uses all 32 CSWO Reports to produce a national summary report each year, and this provides an opportunity to set our local social care and social work services in the wider national context.
- 5.2 The report considers how social work and social care services have been delivered over the last financial year (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022). It identifies the challenges which have faced social work and social care services as a result of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and how the new demands that emerged in the first 6 months of COVID are continuing to have a significant impact. While our services have remobilised, the level of recovery and renewal that was anticipated is not proving possible due largely to the levels of demand and complex needs that are continuing to present across social work and social care.
- 5.3 In October 2020, Council approved the equivalent of 7.0 FTE temporary additional social work staff for Services for Children Young People and Families to ensure capacity within the Child Protection Duty Team and fieldwork teams until end of March 2023. This was to ensure that resources were not directed away from preventative and earlier intervention
- 5.4 The Scottish Government provided recurring additional funding of £705k for adult social work capacity in the current financial year and this has been used to augment social worker capacity in locality teams to remove demand pressures from the Access Team.
- 5.5 It is clear that the additional pressures are continuing in key areas and there remains a significantly higher workload at our "front door" services. It was anticipated that the workload and demand pressures would dissipate by the end of March 2023, but this is not borne out in the analysis of data, performance and trends set on in the CSWO annual report. Social Work Scotland published research in June 2022 into the level of social work caseloads and the impact on social workers indicates that this is a national trend.

5.6 The changes in practices such as the implementation of multi-agency Initial Referral Discussions in adult support and protection is improving the effectiveness of the initial response to adults at risk. This was validated by a joint inspection of adult support and protection which published in August 2022 and covered a two-year period from June 2020 to June 2022. Although this is outwith the reporting period, it is important to note that determined and committed staff are delivering a high quality of service to our citizens and continuing to innovate, improve and adapt practices. That is a huge achievement in the current context and demonstration of the contribution our social care and social work staff can make to the experience of our most vulnerable citizens.

5.7 The key challenges going into 2022/23 will be:

- managing the financial pressures and increasing demands across all social work and social care services and ensuring that social work and social care staff are engaged meaningfully in addressing them;
- pressing ahead with review and transformation, in line with the Perth and Kinross Offer, where there are demand pressures
- to secure earlier intervention and prevention through Whole Family Wellbeing in children's services;
- continuing to meet our corporate parenting responsibilities through the revised corporate parenting plan, Our Promise to You;
- continuing the support for care home and care at home services to manage the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and to reduce levels of unmet need for care at home;
- the final stages of the implementation of MOSAIC, a new fit for purpose social work and social care IT system and associated staff development;
- responding to workforce pressures and recruitment challenges in adult social care services;
- working in partnership with key third sector organisations to deliver a range of essential services and continuing to explore areas for collaboration and jointly commissioning services with partners;
- developing and implementing new workforce development programmes in trauma-informed practices, public protection and disseminating learning from case reviews; and
- preparing for the establishment of the National Care Services which allows staff to be engaged meaningfully while continuing to press ahead with the improvement agenda in Perth & Kinross.

## **6. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 In conclusion, the CSWO's assessment of performance over 2021/22 is that overall performance in securing high quality experiences for people who use social work and social care services has remained good overall despite major challenges. The demand for social work and social care services has increased as the impact of the pandemic is realised and the challenges for staff are now more acute.

- 6.2 There is a need to ensure that this staff receive support for their health and wellbeing to stay well and to continue to provide essential and critical services in the longer term, and, that the Council and the Integrated Joint Board keep under review the adequacy of social work staffing to meet the increased level of needs and demands presented as a result of COVID.

**Author(s)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
Jacquie Pepper	Chief Social Work Officer, Perth and Kinross Council	<a href="mailto:ECSCCommittee@pkc.gov.uk">ECSCCommittee@pkc.gov.uk</a> 01738 475000

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## 1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

<b>Strategic Implications</b>	<b>Yes/None</b>
Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Plan	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Resource Implications</b>	
Financial	<b>N/A</b>
Workforce	<b>YES</b>
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Assessments</b>	
Equality Impact Assessment	<b>N/A</b>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<b>N/A</b>
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	<b>N/A</b>
Legal and Governance	<b>N/A</b>
Risk	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	
Internal	<b>Yes</b>
External	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Communication</b>	
Communications Plan	<b>N/A</b>

### 1. Strategic Implications

#### Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective Nos (i), (iv) and (v).

#### Corporate Plan

- 1.2 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and

(v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective Nos (i), (iv) and (v).

## **2. Resource Implications**

### Financial

2.1 There are no known financial resource implications at this time.

### Workforce

2.2 This report refers to the need for workforce planning and this is partly addressed in that Integrated Joint Board's 3-year Workforce Plan approved in June 2022.

### Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 There are no asset management resource implications at this time.

## **3. Assessments**

### Equality Impact Assessment

3.1 This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

(i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.2 The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

### Sustainability

3.3 Not Applicable

### Legal and Governance

3.4 There are no legal and governance implications at this time.

3.5 Not Applicable

### Risk

3.6 There are no associated risks at this time.

#### **4. Consultation**

##### Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Legal and Governance Services; Education and Children's Service's Senior Management Team; Health and Social Care Partnership Executive Management Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

##### External

- 4.2 Not applicable

#### **5. Communication**

- 5.1 There are no communication issues at this time.

#### **2. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 2.1 There are no background papers.

#### **3. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Chief Social Work Officer Report 2021/22